

What is Claimed is:

1. A method for reminding a user with an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising:

providing the user with the ability to add the program to a watch list; and

automatically prompting the user to add future showings to the watch list.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the future showings comprise future episodes of the program.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the future showings comprise repeat showings of the program.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the user is reminded of the program on the watch list when the program is about to begin.

6. A method for reminding a user with an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising:

providing the user with the ability to add the program to a watch list; and

displaying the watch list, wherein displaying the watch list comprises a list of programs that are on the watch list and watch list options for each program on the watch list.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the watch list options comprise an option for displaying the program on the watch list.

9. The method of claim 6, wherein the watch list options comprise an option for removing the program from the watch list.

10. The method of claim 6, wherein the watch list options comprise an option for displaying information about programs on the watch list.

11. The method of claim 6, wherein the watch list is displayed on a touch-screen remote control.

12. A method for reminding a user with an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising:

providing the user with the ability to add the program to a watch list; and

providing the user with the ability to navigate between programs on the watch list without displaying the watch list.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the user may navigate the watch list by pressing a key on a user input device.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein the user may watch a next program on the watch list by pressing a key on a user input device.

16. The method of claim 12, wherein the user may watch a previous program on the watch list by pressing a key on a user input device.

17. A method for reminding a user with an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising:

providing the user with the ability to add the program to a watch list;

displaying the watch list; and

displaying at least one program while the watch list is displayed, wherein the program is reduced in size for display so that the watch list does not obscure the program.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

19. A method for reminding a user with an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising automatically adding a program to a watch list based on user preferences.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

21. A method for reminding a user with an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising automatically removing a program from a watch list based on user preferences.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

23. A system for reminding a user of an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising:

circuitry that provides the user with the ability to add the program to a watch list and that automatically prompts the user to add future showings to the watch list.

24. The system of claim 23, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

25. The system of claim 23, wherein the future showings comprise future episodes of the program.

26. The system of claim 23, wherein the future showings comprise repeat showings of the program.

27. The system of claim 23, wherein the user is reminded of the program on the watch list when the program is about to begin.

28. A system for reminding a user of an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising circuitry that provides the user with the ability to add the program to a watch list and that displays the watch list, wherein displaying the watch list comprises a list of

programs that are on the watch list and watch list options for each program on the watch list.

29. The system of claim 28, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

30. The system of claim 28, wherein the watch list options comprise an option for displaying the program on the watch list.

31. The system of claim 28, wherein the watch list options comprise an option for removing the program from the watch list.

32. The system of claim 28, wherein the watch list options comprise an option for displaying information about programs on the watch list.

33. The system of claim 28, wherein the watch list is displayed on a touch-screen remote control.

34. A system for reminding a user of an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising circuitry that provides the user with the ability to add the program to a watch list and that provides the user with the ability to navigate between programs on the watch list without displaying the watch list.

35. The system of claim 34, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

36. The system of claim 34, wherein the user may navigate the watch list by pressing a key on a user input device.

37. The system of claim 34, wherein the user may watch a next program on the watch list by pressing a key on a user input device.

38. The system of claim 34, wherein the user may watch a previous program on the watch list by pressing a key on a user input device.

39. A system for reminding a user of an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising circuitry that provides the user with the ability to add the program to a watch list, that displays the watch list, and that displays at least one program while the watch list is displayed, wherein the program is reduced in size for display so that the watch list does not obscure the program.

40. The system of claim 39, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a

music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

41. A system for reminding a user of an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising automatically adding a program to a watch list based on user preferences.

42. The system of claim 41, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

43. A system for reminding a user of an interactive television application that at least one program is about to start, comprising automatically removing a program to a watch list based on user preferences.

44. The system of claim 43, wherein the program is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet Web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

45. A method of providing program access to a user, comprising:

adding a program of interest to a watch list based on at least one user action;



displaying the watch list in response to user input while the user is watching a program;

allowing the user to indicate a program on the displayed watch list;

allowing the user to indicate an action to be performed that is related to the indicated program; and

performing the indicated action.

46. The method of claim 45, wherein the program of interest is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

47. The method of claim 45, wherein the user action comprises selecting the program of interest in an interactive program guide.

48. The method of claim 45, wherein the user action comprises purchasing the program of interest.

49. The method of claim 45, wherein the user action comprises recording the program of interest.

50. The method of claim 45, wherein programs related to the program of interest are also added to the watch list.

51. The method of claim 50, wherein the programs related to the program of interest are episodes of the same program series.

52. The method of claim 45, wherein the user action comprises defining a preference profile.

53. The method of claim 50, further comprising automatically removing the program of interest from the watch list when the user changes the preference profile.

54. The method of claim 45, wherein the indicated action comprises accessing a program that is similar to the program of interest.

55. The method of claim 45, wherein the program of interest is the same as the program that the user is watching.

56. The method of claim 45, wherein displaying the watch list comprises displaying only programs on the watch list that are currently available to the user.

57. The method of claim 45, wherein the watch list is displayed overlaid on the program being viewed by the user.

58. The method of claim 45, wherein the watch list is displayed on the same display device as the displayed program without obscuring the program that the user is watching.

59. The method of claim 45, wherein the watch list is displayed on a different display device

than is being used to display the program that the user is watching.

60. The method of claim 59, wherein the watch list is displayed on a touch-screen remote control.

61. The method of claim 45, further comprising displaying the watch list automatically prior to the start of a program on the watch list.

62. The method of claim 61, further comprising allowing the user to highlight a program on the watch list, and simultaneously displaying the program that the user is watching, the watch list, and information related to the highlighted program.

63. The method of claim 62, wherein the information related to the highlighted program is video or a video image associated with the highlighted program.

64. The method of claim 62, wherein the information related to the highlighted program is a description of the highlighted program.

65. The method of claim 45, wherein the user indicates an action by pressing a corresponding key on a remote control.

66. The method of claim 45, wherein the user indicates an action by selecting an on-screen option.

67. The method of claim 66, wherein the on-screen option is displayed as part of the watch list and associated with a program on the watch list, and the watch list is displayed on the same device which is displaying the program that the user is watching.

68. The method of claim 66, wherein the on-screen option is displayed as part of the watch list and associated with a program on the watch list, and the watch list is displayed on a different device than the one which is displaying the program that the user is watching.

69. The method of claim 45, wherein the user indicates a default action by selecting a program from the watch list.

70. The method of claim 45, wherein the indicated action is watching the indicated program.

71. The method of claim 45, wherein the indicated action is listening to the indicated program.

72. The method of claim 45, wherein the indicated action is surfing the indicated program.

73. The method of claim 45, wherein the indicated action is displaying information about the indicated program.

74. The method of claim 45, wherein the indicated action is playing the indicated program.

75. The method of claim 45, wherein the indicated action is downloading the indicated program.

76. The method of claim 45, wherein the indicated action is viewing the indicated program.

77. The method of claim 45, wherein the indicated action is removing the indicated program from the watch list.

78. The method of claim 45, further comprising allowing the user to access programs on the watch list without displaying the watch list.

79. The method of claim 78, wherein allowing the user to access programs on the watch list comprises displaying a next program on the watch list when the user presses a corresponding key on a remote control.

80. The method of claim 78, wherein allowing the user to access programs on the watch list comprises displaying a previous program on the watch list when the user presses a corresponding key on a remote control.

81. The method of claim 45, further comprising adding a program to the watch list independent of the user action.

82. The method of claim 81, wherein the program is added to the watch list as a promotion.

83. The method of claim 45, further comprising automatically removing the program of

interest from the watch list when the program is no longer available.

84. The method of claim 45, wherein the user input comprises pressing a key on a remote control.

85. The method of claim 45, wherein the user input comprises making a selection on a touch-screen remote control.

86. The method of claim 45, further comprising adding a program to the watch list after the user has watched the program for at least a specified period of time.

87. The method of claim 45, further comprising automatically removing the watch list from the display after a specified period of user inaction.

88. The method of claim 45, further comprising removing the watch list from the display in response to user input.

89. The method of claim 45, further comprising automatically pausing a first program that the user is watching when the user selects a second program from the watch list.

90. The method of claim 89, further comprising automatically restarting the first program that was paused when the user returns to the first program.

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91. The method of claim 89, wherein the first program is a video-on-demand program.

92. The method of claim 89, wherein the first program is a previously recorded program.

93. The method of claim 89, wherein the first program is recorded as broadcast while paused.

94. The method of claim 93, further comprising automatically playing the recorded portion of the first program that was paused when the user returns to the first program.

95. The method of claim 45, further comprising automatically saving the state of a first program that the user is watching when the user selects a second program from the watch list.

96. The method of claim 95, further comprising automatically restoring the state of the first program when the user returns to the first program.

97. The method of claim 95, wherein the first program comprises a software application.

98. The method of claim 95, wherein the software application comprises an email application.

99. The method of claim 95, wherein the software application comprises an e-commerce application.

100. The method of claim 95, wherein the software application comprises a game.

101. The method of claim 45, further comprising allowing the user to specify the sort criteria for the programs on the watch list.

102. The method of claim 101, wherein the sort criteria comprise at least one of program start time, channel identifier, type of program, most recent time viewed, and program name.

103. A system that provides program access to a user with an interactive television application, comprising:

circuitry that adds a program of interest to a watch list based on at least one user action, that displays the watch list in response to user input while the user is watching a program, that allows the user to indicate a program on the displayed watch list, that allows the user to indicate an action to be performed that is related to the indicated program; and that performs the indicated action.

104. The system of claim 103, wherein the program of interest is one of a television program, a video-on-demand program, a near video-on-demand program, a previously recorded program, an Internet web page, a music channel, a digital audio program, a game, or a software application.

105. The system of claim 103, wherein the user action comprises selecting the program of interest in an interactive program guide.



106. The system of claim 103, wherein the user action comprises purchasing the program of interest.

107. The system of claim 103, wherein the user action comprises recording the program of interest.

108. The system of claim 103, wherein programs related to the program of interest are also added to the watch list.

109. The system of claim 108, wherein the programs related to the program of interest are episodes of the same program series.

110. The system of claim 103, wherein the user action comprises defining a preference profile.

111. The system of claim 110, further comprising automatically removing the program of interest from the watch list when the user changes the preference profile.

112. The system of claim 103, wherein the indicated action comprises accessing a program that is similar to the program of interest.

113. The system of claim 103, wherein the program of interest is the same as the program that the user is watching.

114. The system of claim 103, wherein displaying the watch list comprises displaying only

programs on the watch list that are currently available to the user.

115. The system of claim 103, wherein the watch list is displayed overlaid on the program being viewed by the user.

116. The system of claim 103, wherein the watch list is displayed on the same display device as the displayed program without obscuring the program that the user is watching.

117. The system of claim 103, wherein the watch list is displayed on a different display device than is being used to display the program that the user is watching.

118. The system of claim 117, wherein the watch list is displayed on a touch-screen remote control.

119. The system of claim 103, further comprising displaying the watch list automatically prior to the start of a program on the watch list.

120. The system of claim 119, further comprising allowing the user to highlight a program on the watch list, and simultaneously displaying the program that the user is watching, the watch list, and information related to the highlighted program.

121. The system of claim 120, wherein the information related to the highlighted program is video

or a video image associated with the highlighted program.

122. The system of claim 120, wherein the information related to the highlighted program is a description of the highlighted program.

123. The system of claim 103, wherein the user indicates an action by pressing a corresponding key on a remote control.

124. The system of claim 103, wherein the user indicates an action by selecting an on-screen option.

125. The system of claim 124, wherein the on-screen option is displayed as part of the watch list and associated with a program on the watch list, and the watch list is displayed on the same device which is displaying the program that the user is watching.

126. The system of claim 124, wherein the on-screen option is displayed as part of the watch list and associated with a program on the watch list, and the watch list is displayed on a different device than the one which is displaying the program that the user is watching.

127. The system of claim 103, wherein the user indicates a default action by selecting a program from the watch list.

128. The system of claim 103, wherein the indicated action is watching the indicated program.

129. The system of claim 103, wherein the indicated action is listening to the indicated program.

130. The system of claim 103, wherein the indicated action is surfing the indicated program.

131. The system of claim 103, wherein the indicated action is displaying information about the indicated program.

132. The system of claim 103, wherein the indicated action is playing the indicated program.

133. The system of claim 103, wherein the indicated action is downloading the indicated program.

134. The system of claim 103, wherein the indicated action is viewing the indicated program.

135. The system of claim 103, wherein the indicated action is removing the indicated program from the watch list.

136. The system of claim 103, further comprising allowing the user to access programs on the watch list without displaying the watch list.

137. The system of claim 136, wherein allowing the user to access programs on the watch list comprises displaying a next program on the watch list when the user presses a corresponding key on a remote control.

138. The system of claim 136, wherein allowing the user to access programs on the watch list comprises displaying a previous program on the watch list when the user presses a corresponding key on a remote control.

139. The system of claim 103, further comprising adding a program to the watch list independent of the user action.

140. The system of claim 139, wherein the program is added to the watch list as a promotion.

141. The system of claim 103, further comprising automatically removing the program of interest from the watch list when the program is no longer available.

142. The system of claim 103, wherein the user input comprises pressing a key on a remote control.

143. The system of claim 103, wherein the user input comprises making a selection on a touch-screen remote control.

144. The system of claim 103, further comprising adding a program to the watch list after the user has watched the program for at least a specified period of time.

145. The system of claim 103, further comprising automatically removing the watch list from the display after a specified period of user inaction.

146. The system of claim 103, further comprising removing the watch list from the display in response to user input.

147. The system of claim 103, further comprising automatically pausing a first program that the user is watching when the user selects a second program from the watch list.

148. The system of claim 147, further comprising automatically restarting the first program that was paused when the user returns to the first program.

149. The system of claim 147, wherein the first program is a video-on-demand program.

150. The system of claim 147, wherein the first program is a previously recorded program.

151. The system of claim 147, wherein the first program is recorded as broadcast while paused.

152. The system of claim 151, further comprising automatically playing the recorded portion of the first program that was paused when the user returns to the first program.

153. The system of claim 103, further comprising automatically saving the state of a first program that the user is watching when the user selects a second program from the watch list.

154. The system of claim 153, further comprising automatically restoring the state of the first program when the user returns to the first program.

155. The system of claim 153, wherein the first program comprises a software application.

156. The system of claim 155, wherein the software application comprises an email application.

157. The system of claim 155, wherein the software application comprises an e-commerce application.

158. The system of claim 155, wherein the software application comprises a game.

159. The system of claim 103, further comprising allowing the user to specify the sort criteria for the programs on the watch list.

160. The system of claim 159, wherein the sort criteria comprise at least one of program start time, channel identifier, type of program, most recent time viewed, and program name.